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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY

NOVEMBER 26, 2002

1. This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for November 26, 2002. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICS, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

2. PRO-OCALAN PROTEST IN ADANA
(Evrensel) A group of youths who call themselves "Democratic Uprising Youth" gathered in Seyhan's (Adana) Yenibey quarter on November 24 to protest PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan's isolation. During the demonstration, they lit fires, closed the main road to traffic and shouted pro-Ocalan slogans.

3. DRIVE TO SPEAK IN KURDISH
(Evrensel) Centennial University (Van) students launched a campaign to speak in Kurdish on the campus over the next two days to mark the first anniversary of the Mother-tongue Education Campaign. The students will not participate in class interactions and will not respond to their professors.

4. BAN ON KURDISH NAME
(Evrensel) Mersin Birth Registry Directorate denied Mersin resident Mehmet Emin Aydin permission to give the name "Jelya" to his newborn daughter, claiming it is "not Turkish." Aydin called the decision "unlawful" and "a family choice." Aydin said he would pursue all legal avenues, including the European Court of Human Rights, to assert his rights. Hurriyet cited the new Culture Minister, Huseyin Celik, as saying that all kinds of names could be given to children as long as they did not connote animosity.

5. ELECTRICITY THIEVES ARRESTED
(Evrensel) In Diyarbakir, 19 Turkish Electricity Distribution Corporation (TEDAS) subscribers were arrested for illegal use of electricity.

6. OHAL PAYMENTS TO CONTINUE AFTER OHAL'S ABOLITION
(Sabah) The State of Emergency (OHAL), put in effect in Eastern and Southeastern Turkey in 1987, will be lifted in Diyarbakir and Sirnak on November 30 in line with a recent decision made by the Turkish National Security Council (MGK). The Interior Ministry has come up with a formula to shift to "Critical Province" practice in the Southeast after OHAL's abolition. The new formula will allow OHAL compensation payments made to personnel serving in the region to continue. (Note: Such payments are similar to "danger pay.") These payments were designed to encourage personnel serving in the region and the new formula is intended to avoid a possible shortage of personnel in the future. The Ministry has included Diyarbakir, Sirnak, Hakkari, Mus, Van, Bingol, Mardin, Bitlis, Siirt, Tunceli and Batman on the list of "Critical Provinces." After November 30, OHAL Governor's Office will reportedly be replaced with a "Coordinator Governorate," similar to those used in disaster areas.

ECONOMIC AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

7. NEW COMMERCIAL CREDIT AGREEMENT SIGNED
(Turkiye) The Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce signed a protocol agreement with Is Bank in an

effort to contribute to anticipated economic growth and revival. Under the agreement, Is Bank will provide chamber members with commercial credits totaling up to TL 60 billion (approx. USD 40,000) each.

18. INCREASE IN WATER PRICE

(Hurriyet/Milliyet/Turkiye) Adana Municipality's Water and Sewage Administration (ASKI) increased the price of city water by 28%. With the increase, the price of per cubic meter of water rose from TL 781,000 (approx. USD 0.50) to TL 1 million (approx. USD 0.64).

HOLTZ